



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/849,626	05/03/2001	Chaitanya S. Bangur	210121.478C16	9720

500 7590 07/11/2003

SEED INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW GROUP PLLC
701 FIFTH AVE
SUITE 6300
SEATTLE, WA 98104-7092

EXAMINER

FREDMAN, JEFFREY NORMAN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1634

DATE MAILED: 07/11/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/849,626	BANGUR ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Jeffrey Fredman	1634	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on April 7, 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-13 and 15-18 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 14 and 19-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112 - Description

1. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

2. Claims 14 and 19-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

In analysis of the claims for compliance with the written description requirement of 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, the written description guidelines note regarding genus/species situations that "Satisfactory disclosure of a ``representative number" depends on whether one of skill in the art would recognize that the applicant was in possession of the necessary common attributes or features of the elements possessed by the members of the genus in view of the species disclosed." (See: Federal Register: December 21, 1999 (Volume 64, Number 244), revised guidelines for written description.)

All of the current claims encompass a genus of nucleic acids which are different from those disclosed in the specification, specifically, any oligonucleotide which hybridizes under moderately stringent conditions to SEQ ID NO: 1797. The specification on page 87 does discuss moderately stringent conditions but permits a

temperature range between 50 and 60 degrees, and indicates that the specified conditions are simply for illustration. Even relying upon the conditions in the specification, nearly every oligonucleotide which comprises perfectly matching 22 mer will meet this stringency language. So while there are only 4578 perfectly matching 22 mers, there would be 4.8×10^9 different 32 mers which would contain 22 described nucleotides and 10 unknown and unpossessed nucleotides. This calculation does not even include the much larger number of mutations possible within the probe regions. This large genus is represented in the specification by only the particularly named SEQ ID No. Thus, applicant has express possession of only one sequence, SEQ ID NO: 1797, in a genus which comprises hundreds of millions of different possibilities. Here, no common element or attributes of the sequences are disclosed, not even the presence of certain domains. No structural limitations or requirements which provide guidance on the identification of sequences which meet these functional limitations is provided. Further, these claims encompass alternately spliced versions of the proteins, allelic variants including insertions and mutations, inactive precursor proteins which have a removable amino terminal end, and only one specific nucleic acid sequence has been provided. No written description of alleles, of upstream or downstream regions containing additional sequence, or of alternative splice variants has been provided in the specification.

It is noted in the recently decided case The Regents of the University of California v. Eli Lilly and Co. 43 USPQ2d 1398 (Fed. Cir. 1997) decision by the CAFC that

"A definition by function, as we have previously indicated, does not suffice to define the genus because it is only an indication of what the gene does, rather than what it is. See *Fiers*, 984 F.2d at 1169- 71, 25 USPQ2d at 1605- 06 (discussing Amgen). It is only a definition of a useful result rather than a definition of what achieves that result. Many such genes may achieve that result. The description requirement of the patent statute requires a description of an invention, not an indication of a result that one might achieve if one made that invention. See *In re Wilder*, 736 F.2d 1516, 1521, 222 USPQ 369, 372- 73 (Fed. Cir. 1984) (affirming rejection because the specification does "little more than outlin[e] goals appellants hope the claimed invention achieves and the problems the invention will hopefully ameliorate."). Accordingly, naming a type of material generally known to exist, in the absence of knowledge as to what that material consists of, is not a description of that material. "

In the current situation, where the definition of the possible probes lack any specific structure, is precisely the situation of naming a type of material which is generally known to likely exist, but, except for the full length sequence, is in the absence of knowledge of the material composition and fails to provide descriptive support for the generic claim to anything which hybridizes to SEQ ID NO: 1797, for example.

It is noted that in *Fiers v. Sugano* (25 USPQ2d, 1601), the Fed. Cir. concluded that

"...if inventor is unable to envision detailed chemical structure of DNA sequence coding for specific protein, as well as method of obtaining it, then conception is not achieved until reduction to practice has occurred, that is, until after gene has been isolated...conception of any chemical substance, requires definition of that substance other than by its functional utility."

The current situation is a definition of the compound solely but its functional utility, as a hybridization product, without any definition of the particular changes claimed.

In the instant application, certain specific SEQ ID NOs are described. Also, in *Vas-Cath Inc. v. Mahurkar* (19 USPQ2d 1111, CAFC 1991), it was concluded that:

"...applicant must also convey, with reasonable clarity to those skilled in art, that applicant, as of filing date sought, was in possession of invention, with invention being, for purposes of "written description" inquiry, whatever is presently claimed."

In the application at the time of filing, there is no record or description which would demonstrate conception of any nucleic acids other than those expressly disclosed. Therefore, the claims fail to meet the written description requirement by encompassing sequences which are not described in the specification.

Response to Amendment

3. The Declaration under 37 CFR 1.132 filed April 7, 2003 is sufficient to overcome the rejection of the claims based upon enablement grounds.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed April 7, 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant's arguments with regard to the enablement rejection, and in particular the declaration filed April 7, 2003, were persuasive. Consequently, the enablement rejection is withdrawn in view of the Declaration.

Applicant argues that the written description rejection is complied with because there is guidance in the specification and in the prior art regarding the principles of nucleic acid hybridization. Applicant notes that the skilled artisan would be able to design probes for the detection process. However, these arguments are enablement type arguments which are not relevant to the question of possession. The issue for written description is whether the genus is described in the specification.

Applicant also argues that there is possession of the broad genus of any oligonucleotide that hybridizes to SEQ ID NO: 1797 under moderately stringent hybridization conditions because there are identifying characteristics, specifically the ability to hybridize to SEQ ID NO: 1797. This is distinct from, for instance, example 9 of the utility guidelines because there the hybridization was under highly stringent conditions, not the moderately stringent conditions used here, and the claim required a specific function of the resultant protein, such as adenylyl cyclase activity, while no such cognate function is required here. First, it is important to appreciate the difference that hybridization conditions will make. The use of highly stringent hybridization conditions will limit the resulting sequences to sequences which are nearly identical in structure with the specific described sequence. The currently claimed moderately stringent hybridization conditions will permit significant undescribed variation relative to the specific described sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1797.

Second, the presence of a single example, with no function required for the oligonucleotide, fails to comply with the requirement for written description. As the court noted in *Lilly*, "Accordingly, naming a type of material generally known to exist, in the absence of knowledge as to what that material consists of, is not a description of that material." The current case is precisely the situation outlined as failing to comply with the description requirement in *Lilly*. The definition of the oligonucleotides is significantly functional with no specific structure whatsoever required by the claims. Further, while as Applicant correctly points out, materials other than SEQ ID NO: 1797 which comply with the claim are capable of existing, there is a complete absence of knowledge

regarding what the other oligonucleotides actually consist of. Therefore, the written description rejection is maintained.

Conclusion

5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

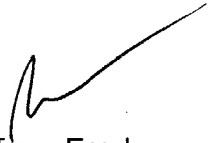
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeffrey Fredman whose telephone number is 703-308-6568. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gary Benzion can be reached on 703-308-1119. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-3014 for regular communications and 703-305-3014 for After Final communications.

Application/Control Number: 09/849,626
Art Unit: 1634

Page 8

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0196.



Jeffrey Fredman
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1634

July 9, 2003